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product

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By Joe Lindsey,
joe@bicycling.com

Klein Moves to Wisconsin

By Joe Lindsey

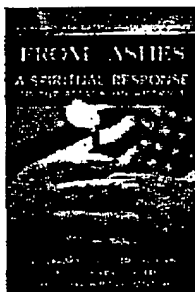
Salsa Recalls Disc Rims

By Joe Lindsey,
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Anna Wilson's Old School Hour Record

By Sean Coffey

RockShox Recall

From The Ashes:
Together We Can Heal

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Product of the Day

Product Of The Day Archives



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Product of the Day: March 17, 2002 Polarpak Hydration System By Andrew Juskaitis



PRICE: \$34.95 (70 oz.), \$39.95 (100 oz.)

BUY IT IF: You prefer your H2O chilled.

FORGET IT IF: As long as you've got water, you don't care about its temperature.

CONTACT: 208/428-8058; www.polarpak.com

The hydration pack is a magnificent innovation. In the spirit of self-sufficiency, most off-road riders carry necessary goodies in a pack anyway, so why not stash much-needed water on your back as well? Polarpak takes that thought process one step further by asking, "why not chill that water on your back as well?" Its 70- and 100-ounce Polarpak hydration bladder does just that. Using non-toxic gel-filled pockets, the Polarpak bladder keeps your fluid of choice cold for up to 8 hours. A neoprene-insulated 5/16-inch diameter hose carries fluid down through a mid-line quick-detach break valve to the no-leak, no-drip, high-flow bite valve. A Nalgene-compatible screw cap seals the bladder up tight once filled.

While I don't normally crave cold water when riding, I will admit the Polarpak does a great job of keeping water chilly. The gel freezes completely (but not rock hard) in about 4 hours, and kept my water noticeably cold for about 5 hours. Some of the features I do appreciate about the Polarpak are its quick-release hose valve and easy-to-access bite valve. The quick-release hose makes it ultra-convenient to remove the bladder from a hydration pack, especially when the hose is routed internally through the shoulder straps (which makes traditional bladders very difficult to remove). While CamelBak still takes top honors in the bite valve department, the Polarpak's valve works almost as well, offering copious amounts of fluid without considerable mouth acrobatics.

In addition, the constant freezing action of the bladder inhibits the growth of bacteria, considerably cutting down the cleaning regimen. If you're one of those riders who adds ice to their bladders, the Polarpak is a much better option because it keeps fluids colder longer, won't dilute them as ice melts and doesn't harbor sharp ice fragments (which can penetrate regular bladders) and is much easier to remove from the pack and freeze. On top of all that, it makes a great icepack for roadside medical emergencies.



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